THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The process of computerisation of ledgers at branch level in public sector banks was started in the year 1984-85 with the installation of Advanced Ledger Posting Machines (ALPMS). So far 28 branches of public sector banks at different locations have been computerised.

(c) As per the 1983 agreement between the Indian Banks Association and Bank Employees Association, there shall be no retrenchment of staff as a result of introduction of machines/computers.

Relaxation in Import of Silver

122. SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have eased the import restrictions on silver;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof with background for such a move;

(c) whether these relaxations permit some categories of people to bring silver into India;

(d) if so, the names of categories of these persons with details of silver to be allowed for each individual and customs duty to be paid on the same;

(e) whether these relaxation have eased the local markets of silver of the country; and

(f) if so, what are the details thereof and its effect on smuggling of silver?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M .V CHANDRASHEKAR MURTHY): (a) to (d) In the background of the success of Gold Import Scheme, the Government decided to allow passengers of Indian origin or passengers holding a valid passport issued under the Passport Act, 1967, to import silver as baggage provided that such passengers are coming to India after a period of not less than six months of stay abroad and the duty at the rate of Rs. 500/- per Kg. is paid in convertible foreign currency. The maximum quantity of silver which can be imported is restricted to 100 Kgs. per passenger.

(e) and (f) The price of silver before announcement of these relaxations was Rs. 6800/- per Kg. which declined to Rs. 5490/- per Kg. by 28.02.1993. Though it started rising thereafter, maximum average monthly price being Rs. 6216/- per Kg. in May, 1993, it again declined to Rs. 6048/- per Kg. in June, 1993. From February, 1993 to June, 1993 a quantity of 1558 tonnes of silver has been imported under the Scheme. The legal imports of silver coupled with a decline in the profitability of smuggling this metal are likely to lead to reduction in smuggling of silver.

Transfer Policy in the State Bank of India

123. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the harassment being meted out to ex-servicemen serving as security officers (Assistant Manager—Security) in State Bank of India, Chandigarh Region (Punjab Module) due to its transfer policy;

(b) if so, the number of security officers AM (Security) transferred from one centre to another within one year of their posting;

(c) whether MOS (Banking and Insurance) have received any representation from some members of Parliament requesing revocation of such arbitrary transfer orders;

(d) if so, what action has been taken thereon; and

(e) what action has taken by Government to formulate a fool-proof policy in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED): (a) to (e) A letter was received from a Member of Parliament in April, 1993 regarding transfer of one Assistant Manager (Security) of State Bank of India from Hoshiarpur to Amritsar within a short span of one year. State Bank of India in this regard has reported that following a review of the law and order situation in Punjab, Hoshiarpur as a centre for Security Officers' Headquarters was abolished which necessitated the transfers of the concerned officer. State Bank of India has stated that transfers are made within the Bank on administrative grounds and has denied the allegation of any harassment meted out to any ex-servicemen serving as security officers.

Bifurcation of UTI

124. SHRI BISHAMBHAR NATH PANDE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to split the Unit Trust of India (UTI) into two organisations;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what are the details of Government's policy towards UTI?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Government's policy is to bring the Mutual Fund activities of UTI under the regulatory framework of Securities and Exchange Board of India.

Malpractice Among I.T. Staff

125. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a growing number of complaints of corruption against the Income-tax staff;

(b) if so, the details of such complaints during the last three years;

(c) whether such complaints were investigated by vigilance department of Income-Tax or Vigilance Directorate if so, the number of cases investigated and the action taken against the employees during the last three years;

(d) whether Government proposes to change the structure of Income-Tax department; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) and (b) The complaints received by the Directorate of Income-tax (Vigilance) against Group 'A' and 'B' Officers in the Income-tax Department in the last three years are given below:—

1990-91	— 549
1991-92	— 465
1992-93	— 576

(c) Many of the complaints are anonymous or pseudonymous, and are not pursued. The details of cases investigated and regular departmental action initiated against Group 'A' and 'B' Officers